

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 00522 020030Z
ACTION EA-12

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CINCPAC HONOLULU

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 00522

FOR IEA IBS IPS, CINCPAC FOR USIA ADVISOR

EO 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: SATELLITE BREAKUP MEDIA REACTION

1. NEW ZEALAND'S LARGEST DAILY, THE "NEW ZEALAND HERALD", UNDER THE HEADING "PUTTING US ALL AT RISK," COMMENTED EDITORIALY, JANUARY 31:
2. "AT THE END OF THE 1960S WHEN NEIL ALDEN ARMSTRONG FIRST SET FOOT ON THE SURFACE OF THE MOON, SPACE SCIENTISTS WERE ALMOST WORSHIPPED. THE WORLD, IT WAS SAID, COULD NO LONGER FIND SUPERLATIVES ADEQUATE ENOUGH TO EXPRESS MAN'S ELATION WITH MAN. SINCE THEN THE ADULATION HAS COOLED. IT IS NOW FASHIONABLE TO QUESTION WHETHER SCIENTISTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE NUCLEAR ENERGY FIELD, ALWAYS ACT WITH A DEEP SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF MANKIND.
3. "DOUBTS ABOUT THE RELIABILITY OF SPACE VEHICLES AND SO-CALLED FAIL-SAFE PRECAUTIONS MUST BE REINFORCED BY THE MALFUNCTIONING OF THE RUSSIAN COSMOS-954 SATELLITE EQUIPPED WITH A SMALL NUCLEAR REACTOR...

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PAGE 02 WELLIN 00522 020030Z

4. "THE MISHAP IN THIS INSTANCE HAD IMPLICATIONS FOR PEOPLE ANYWHERE AND EVERYWHERE ON THE EARTH'S SURFACE. PRESIDENT CARTER'S ADVISER ON NATIONAL SECURITY, MR BRZEZINSKI, IS SAID TO HAVE EVENTUALLY TAKEN GREAT PAINS TO TELL THE WORLD THAT THERE WAS NO GREAT DANGER FROM THE ACCIDENT. BUT CANADIAN AUTHORITIES FIRST SAID THE SATELLITE WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BURNED OUT IN THE

ATMOSPHERE AND, THEN, A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER, THAT 'SOMETHING MAY HAVE HIT THE GROUND'. THIS SORT OF CONTRADICTION IS UNLIKELY TO AROUSE CONFIDENCE IN THE PRECISION OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE...

5. "THE FACT THAT, ON THIS OCCASION, THE BREAKING UP OCCURRED OVER THE LARGELY DESERTED WASTES OF NORTHWEST CANADA WAS DUE NOT TO SCIENTIFIC CONTROL BUT TO PROVIDENCE.

6. "THE QUESTION IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE NOT JUST TO THE SUPERPOWERS BUT TO EVERY COUNTRY, NO MATTER HOW SMALL."
ANDERSON

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NNN

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